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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Minnesota mom who lost daughter to anorexia witnesses first eating disorder legislation signed into law

Kitty Westin advocated for years to give people struggling with eating disorders access to quality care.

Washington, D.C., December 13, 2016 – Today, Kitty Westin traveled to Capitol Hill to see President Obama sign into law legislation that includes language from [The Anna Westin Act](#), a bill named in honor of Kitty's daughter who lost her life to an eating disorder at age 21.

The eating disorder language within [The 21st Century Cures Act](#) includes provisions for expanding health professional training to include recognition and treatment of eating disorders, ending the exclusion of eating disorders treatment from insurance policies, and providing resources to help the public identify eating disorders early.

“No longer will families have to suffer the death of a child because they couldn't access quality care,” said Westin, who is also a board member of [The Emily Program Foundation](#). “Our family is so thrilled that after 16 years, we can celebrate changes to the law that will help dramatically decrease the likelihood that other families will experience the pain and suffering our family experienced. Nothing can bring Anna back, but we will celebrate this victory for her and so many others like her.”

For the past 16 years the Westins, along with advocates with [The Emily Program](#), a St. Paul-based nationally recognized eating disorder treatment provider and The Emily Program Foundation, a Minnesota non-profit organization focused on eating disorder related education and advocacy, have worked tirelessly in D.C. with the [Eating Disorders Coalition](#) to pass legislation to improve access to quality eating disorder care and prevent further loss of life.

“The training of health professionals in early recognition of eating disorders will save lives,” said Jillian Lampert, PhD, RD, MPH, FAED, Chief Strategy Officer of The Emily Program. “All too often, we hear from clients and families that health professionals didn't intervene early enough, did not recognize the signs and symptoms of eating disorders, and didn't know what to do when they did. Health professionals simply need more training. They don't get adequate training on eating disorders in school or professional trainings, but this law will change that.”

Sen. Amy Klobuchar introduced the Anna Westin Act of 2015 along with along with her colleagues Sens. Kelly Ayotte [R-NH], Tammy Baldwin [D-WI] and Shelley Moore Capito [R-WV]. Since the bill's introduction, Klobuchar led a call to action for her colleagues and the Minnesota delegation to support this life-saving bill, securing support from the vast majority of the Minnesota Congressional Delegation.

"Millions of Americans suffer from eating disorders but very few get the help they need. Anna Westin, who this bill is named for, died after struggling with an eating disorder for several years. Her mom, Kitty, lives in my state and has been a leading voice in the effort to do more to support patients," said Klobuchar. "Passing our bipartisan legislation into law brings us one step closer to preventing future tragedies and giving patients the tools they need to get help."

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About The Emily Program

The Emily Program was founded in 1993 by Dirk Miller, PhD, LP, after his sister Emily recovered from an eating disorder. Recognizing that one size does not fit all, The Emily Program develops a personalized care plan for its clients that incorporates individual and group therapy, nutrition, yoga and more. If you or someone you know is struggling with an eating disorder, call 1-888-EMILY77 or visit emilyprogram.com.

About The Emily Program Foundation

The Emily Program Foundation is on a mission to save lives, change minds, and work to eliminate eating disorders. The Emily Program Foundation envisions a world without stigma and misconceptions about eating disorders and disordered eating. It hopes to be a catalyst in shaping new, informed conversations through advocacy, social outreach, and collaboration with community partners. For more information go to emilyprogramfoundation.org.

About The Eating Disorders Coalition

The Eating Disorders Coalition is a Washington, D.C.-based, federal advocacy organization comprised of treatment providers, advocacy organizations and entities, parents of children with eating disorders, and people experiencing eating disorders nationwide. For more information contact Katrina Velasquez at the Eating Disorders Coalition at kvelasquez@eatingdisorderscoalition.org. Additional resources can also be found at www.eatingdisorderscoalition.org.